



## Accounting for health in climate change policies: A case study of Fiji

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### Abstract:

**Background:** Climate change is expected to affect the health of most populations in the coming decades, having the greatest impact on the poorest and most disadvantaged people in the world. The Pacific islands, including Fiji, are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. **Objective:** The three major health impacts of climate change in Fiji explored in this study were dengue fever, diarrhoeal disease, and malnutrition, as they each pose a significant threat to human health. The aim of this study was to investigate to what extent the Fiji National Climate Change Policy, and a selection of relevant sectoral policies, account for these human health effects of climate change. **Design:** The study employed a three-pronged policy analysis to evaluate: 1) the content of the Fijian National Climate Change Policy and to what extent health was incorporated within this; 2) the context within which the policy was developed; 3) the relevant processes; and 4) the actors involved. A selection of relevant sectoral policies were also analysed to assess the extent to which these included climate change and health considerations. **Results:** The policy analysis showed that these three health impacts of climate change were only considered to a minor extent, and often indirectly, in both the Fiji National Climate Change Policy and the corresponding National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, as well as the Public Health Act. Furthermore, supporting documents in relevant sectors including water and agriculture made no mention of climate change and health impacts. **Conclusions:** The projected health impacts of climate change should be considered as part of reviewing the Fiji National Climate Change Policy and National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, and the Public Health Act. In the interest of public health, this should include strategies for combating dengue fever, malnutrition, and water-borne disease. Related sectoral policies in water and agriculture should also be revised to consider climate change and its impact on human health. Approaches to include health aspects of climate change within sectoral and climate change specific policies should be encouraged, via a number of mechanisms, such as the Health in All Policies approach. Future research could support the Fiji health sector in developing climate change and health programmes.

**Source:** <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24836442>

### Resource Description

#### Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

#### Communication Audience:

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audience to whom the resource is directed

Policymaker

## **Exposure :**

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

## **Geographic Feature:**

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Ocean/Coastal, Tropical

## **Geographic Location:**

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

**Non-United States:** Australasia

## **Health Impact:**

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Infectious Disease, Malnutrition/Undernutrition

**Infectious Disease:** Vectorborne Disease

**Foodborne/Waterborne Disease:** Other Diarrheal Disease

**Vectorborne Disease:** Mosquito-borne Disease

**Mosquito-borne Disease:** Dengue

## **Medical Community Engagement:**

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

## **Mitigation/Adaptation:**

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

## **Population of Concern:** A focus of content

## **Resource Type:**

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion

## **Resilience:**

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to

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shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

### **Timescale:**

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

### **Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:**

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content